



Great Tech Night for San Jose

Posted by [Pierluigi Oliverio](#) on Monday, November 17, 2008

Last week I attended the 8th annual Tech Awards at our convention center. The Tech Museum organizes this amazing event which is sponsored by a "who's who" of tech companies. Nearly 1,500 people attended this year's event. This is one of the best events for San Jose because of the positive PR.

The greater Bay Area tech giants gather at the Tech Awards to celebrate entrepreneurs and inventors for innovation in the categories of Environment, Education, Economic Development, Health and Equality. Nominees and attendees flew in from all over the world. Although some may argue that San Jose is not the center of Silicon Valley, the world does perceive San Jose as the epicenter.

Many of the C-Level executives from these tech companies drive into our Downtown to attend the Tech Awards from their company headquarters in Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Palo Alto, etc., or from their estate homes in Atherton and Saratoga.

Most tech companies today operate in a one-to-three-story campus environments. It might surprise them to see Adobe's vertical campus or the several new Downtown condo towers. Economic development is often viewed in the press as subsidies from government, however, sometimes it is a soft sell, and decision makers need to be exposed to other environments like our Downtown. The indirect hope is that perhaps one or two CEO's may consider Downtown for future growth. Or, when they start their next company, maybe they locate it Downtown.

The awards presentation was filled with video presentations about the nominees in a Discover Channel style. The nominees' creativity was amazing in fixing specific problems in our society which are often issues related to the developing world like clean drinking water, lighting for children to read at night, medical devices to stop the spread of disease or "software as a service" to collaborate on education.

The highlight of the night was honoring Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, a pioneer of micro-credit and founder of Grameen Bank. He started the idea of loaning small amounts of money, in amounts such as \$27, to mostly poor women (94 percent) who could not qualify for traditional bank loans so they could afford to buy seeds, livestock, weaving materials etc. So they therefore could improve their economic situation. As of July 2007, 7.4 million people have been loaned money by Grameen Bank with over 95 percent of the loans paid back which seems to be better than mortgage repayments in the USA. This gentleman has done more to help the poor than most elected officials.

The Tech Awards are a world class event held in our Downtown that provides positive PR for San Jose while highlighting our Downtown for possible future growth of tech companies. Here is a link to award winners and nominees:

<http://www.techawards.org/laureates/>

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